



State Capitol | Lansing, Michigan 48913
PH (517) 373.7350 | FAX (517) 373.9228
www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/senator/patterson/

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Contact: Kristin L. Rieber
Toll Free (866) 262-7307

Patterson: Save Landfill Inspection Programs

Inspection program cuts could threaten safety of residents and the environment

LANSING – Citing the urgent need for continued and thorough landfill inspections, Sen. Bruce Patterson, R-Canton, said today that he will lobby his fellow lawmakers and the administration to save funding for landfill inspection programs in the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ) budget for 2003–2004.

“Slashing the Department of Environmental Quality’s budget could jeopardize funding for much-needed landfill inspection programs,” Patterson said. “These programs are critical to enforcing Michigan’s ban on dangerous substances in landfills – including motor oil and lead acid batteries – that threaten the health of residents and our environment.”

This year, Patterson has sponsored numerous pieces of legislation to ban the influx of out-of-state waste into Michigan, including:

- SB 198, which would restrict the transport and disposal of waste generated outside the state of Michigan.
- SBs 505 and 506, which would prohibit other states and countries from disposing of their waste in Michigan unless their solid waste stream standards are as stringent as Michigan’s standards.
- Senate Resolution 4, urging Congress to allow states to have control over the transport of waste.

“I have real concerns over the short-term and long-term effects certain wastes would have when illegally dumped in our landfills,” Patterson said. “Michigan must continue to enforce any laws prohibiting certain kinds of waste from being dumped in our landfills, for the health of Michigan families and the protection of our natural resources.”

Prior legislative attempts to resolve the problem of foreign waste have been rejected by federal courts. Significant court decisions, including the U.S. Supreme Court’s decision in *Fort Gratiot Sanitary Landfill vs. the Michigan Department of Natural Resources*, have held that no states have the authority to restrict out-of-state waste.

For more information, please contact Senator Patterson’s Office toll free by calling (866) 262-7307.